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In the King's Garden

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In the King's Garden

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Sincerely yours
Gwladys Townshend.

In the King's Garden

and other Poems

By

The Marchioness Townshend

London: John Long

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1906

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PREFACE

AS the name of the writer of these verses has, alas! been of late so prominently before the public, the readers of them will be the more interested to gain some idea of the true character and deeper feelings of this much-tried and keenly suffering woman. Nor will they be disappointed, for Lady Townshend has in this little volume shown herself to the world.

As St. Paul wrote the most powerful of his epistles from his prison-house at Rome, as the Psalmist sang his "De Profundis" when confronted with the greatest difficulties and dangers of his life, so in the darkest hours of her womanhood has this young author been prompted to write these verses. They are word-pictures, simple—some will say—yet full of life and feeling, sighing out the sensations of a soul bowed down with sorrow, yet not without the strong conviction

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that a silver lining to her dark clouds will soon be visible, and that the "Man of Sorrows" Himself was made "perfect through suffering." From the depths of a well the stars may be seen at midday; the deeper the well the clearer is the vision of the lights above. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" were the questions of the writer of the Apocalypse, at a moment of intense perplexity, to whom the answer of assurance and vivid explanation came: "These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: therefore are they before the throne of God."

JAMES WELLER

August, 1906

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IN THE KING'S GARDEN

ONCE on a time there lived a powerful king,
Who ruled his people well, and won their love.
Now, through that land a legend strange did run,
About a maiden who lived far away;
'Twas said she had a fair and wondrous face,
And dwelt within a castle grim and old,
With massive walls and ponderous iron gates.
She sang, so ran the legend, a sweet song—
A song that stole men's hearts away from them,
A song that told of happiness and peace;
Many had gone to try to hear the song,
But if they went they came not back again.
Oft had the king this ancient legend heard,
Oft had he pondered on its mystery;
Now it seemed to take hold of his heart,
Twining itself with ever strengthening cords,
Until his chief desire was to go
And see the maid, and hear her wondrous song.

* * * * * *

Then summoned he one day his courtiers,
And spoke to them in grave and gentle tone:
"We all have heard the legend of the maid,
Whose song fills every soul with ecstasy;
Till now I heard it as you all may do;
I smiled and thought that matter passing strange,
An old dame's tale, I said, and passed it by—
I shall not speak so lightly any more;
For oft-times in the silence of the night
I hear a faint and far-off melody,
Like Siren's voices singing through the mist;
Methinks it is the maiden's song I hear,
The music stirs my soul; I cannot stay—
Someone is calling me—I must away."
His people sighed and clustered round his feet,
They kissed his hands, their eyes all wet with tears,
They cried aloud beseeching him remain;
He blessed them all, and then, with eager steps,
Hastened away from them and from the court,
So anxious was he to begin his quest.

The sun was setting in a sea of gold,
And all the land was bathed in yellow light,
The sleepy birds had ceased their joyous songs,

The little flowers had closed their petal eyes;
The night came on, he laid him down to rest,
Then on again as soon as morning broke
What use to tell the things that next befell!
How day by day he begged a crust of bread,
And ate the berries growing in the woods,
While water from the streams supplied his thirst;
How in the lonely hours of the night—
His only canopy the silent stars—
He thought he heard that tender calling voice,
And awoke to find, alas, it was a dream!
Then on again o'er mountains and o'er vales,
Through forests vast, whose stillness seemed like death,
Until, at last, hope spread her rainbow wings,
And left him in the depths of black despair;
Sadly he sat him down upon a stone,
And wept aloud for very weariness.

When suddenly! what strange, sweet sound was that?
He lifts his head, and listens once again.
A woman's voice of passing loveliness,
Nearer it comes, and nearer yet again;
The mist is lifted as a curtain might,

Disclosing to the king's adoring gaze,
A slender maid in trailing silver robes.
Fair is her hair and like an aureole
Of light, it floats about her saintlike face;
Her gentle eyes look down upon the king,
Her voice like Heaven's music speaks to him.
"Out of the mist of years I call to thee,
And thou, at last, hast heard my voice and come.
The song I sing is not of earth, O king!
And in that thou hast heard its mournful notes,
Thou mayest no more return unto thy realm;
Lift up thine eyes, see what I show to thee—
A garden fairer than thou e'er hast seen,
Filled with a thousand glorious souls, whose lives
Are one sweet song of everlasting love.
No more they sin, no more they part nor weep,
For God has wiped the tears from every eye.
Enter, O king! nor look not back again;
Death am I called, and that of which I sing
Is this fair garden of the Heavenly King.

NUNTIO DEI

A MIGHTY ship ploughing the ocean waves,
Filled with every condition of mankind;
Upon the deck, reclining easily
In a long wicker chair, a tall young man
Watches a group of children at their play.
An interesting face and full of thought
Is his, with great, dark, penetrating eyes;
Eyes that can pierce even the inmost soul,
Eyes that sometimes are full of mystery.
Near to the children, drawing busily,
A little maiden sits, with golden hair;
Ever and anon glancing timidly
Towards the chair whereon the tall young man
Reposes lazily; he smiles at her,
And makes a sign for her to come to him.
With falt'ring steps, hugging her drawings close,
The little maiden timidly draws nigh.
"What are you drawing, may I look at it?"
The young man asks with kindly voice and smile,

Taking the book out of her little hands.
"I did zem all myself," she says at last;
"Indeed," he says, "I think them beautiful;
Fairies are pretty, too—why not draw them?"
"I like doin' fairies too, but zen you see
My daddy 's gone away, he went to Heav'n,
And so I draw ze angels zat he loved."
He looks into the deep blue, earnest eyes,
So serious for one of tender years,
And, lifting her up gently on his knee,
He strokes the tangled mass of soft fair curls.
"What is your name?" he asks with interest;
"Pansy," she answers, looking shyly up.
"Indeed! that is a pretty name," he says,
"Do you know pansies are my favourite flowers,
And tell me, little one, how old are you?
Shall I guess—let me see—well, five or six?"
She looks up gravely, "Yes," she says, "I'm five.
How old are you?" with childlike candour then.
He smiles a slow, strange smile, and gently says
"I'll tell you, little one, how old I am,
But if I do, you will not understand;
Think of the oldest person that you know—
Think of the oldest monument on earth,

Think of deep seas and lofty mountain chains,
Of ancient rivers winding in and out
The crumbling cities made by human hands;
Think of the far-off days when all the world
Held but one man and woman, fair to see,
Who wandered hand in hand 'mongst leafy paths,
And smiling meadows gemmed with many a flower;
Think of the day when evil tempted them—
And then you'll know the day that I was born!"
He speaks more to himself than to the child,
But, as he sees her looks of wonderment,
He holds her to him, and, with change of voice,
Begins to tell her tales of elves and gnomes,
Of fairies bright, and mermaids in the sea;
Of naiads living in the woodland streams,
And dryads dwelling 'mongst the shady trees.
How pleased she is! she claps her little hands
And begs dear "darky man" to tell her more.
And thus begins a bright and happy time
For little Pansy and her friend La Mort;
She never happy unless by his side,
He listening, always full of sympathy
Whene'er she speaks to him of that dear Dad,
Who went away to Heav'n and left them sad.

It makes a picture fair indeed to see—
The tall, dark man, and, sitting at his feet,
The little maiden on a coil of rope,
A rapt expression on her flower-like face,
And on her lips a smile of happiness.
Alas! happiness cannot last for aye—
There comes a day when people see no more
That picture fair, which they have loved to see.
Because the child-companion of La Mort
Falls ill, and comes no more upon the deck.
The doctor cannot think what ails the child,
And shakes his head with grave and puzzled air.
La Mort restlessly paces up and down,
A strange, sad look upon his calm, pale face.
He stops and lifts his arms toward the sky,
And, in a voice of deep emotion, cries—
"Oh! Master of the mighty Universe,
My work is set by Thee, and at Thy will
I bear Thy message over land and sea;
My Lord! Thy will till now was ever mine,
And, though I grieve, I dare not disobey
If Thy commands are given unto me.
Since long ago on Calvary's holy hill,
I, by Thy death, became Thy willing slave.

Master of Heaven and earth—must this thing be?
An answer Lord, a sign, and I obey;
Either I leave this ship alone, or else
At thy command another comes with me.

* * * * * *

Just then the child seems worse, and asks for him,
And, coming upon deck, the mother sees
Him standing silent near the vessel's side,
Gazing with mournful eyes far out to sea.
He turns and looks at her as she comes up—
"Pansy has asked for me," is all he says.
Then silently and slow he follows her
Down the campanion ladder to the room
Or cabin where the little one lies ill.
At last they stop before the cabin door.—
"Listen to me," he says with lowered voice,
"'Tis best for you, and best for Pansy, too,
If I stay here and do not go to her."
"But sir, she begged for you, can you refuse?
I thought you loved her so, will you not come?"
"Aye, I do love her, more than you can tell—
I love her more than anyone on earth,
But if I come, remember—*I shall stay*!"
The mother looks at him, and, full of fear,

At what she dare not think, she takes him in.
The little one sits up, holding her arms
Out to La Mort, who hurries to her side.
"Dear darky man," cries Pansy, "I am glad
That you have come to me, I am so tired."
He puts his arms about the slender form,
So that her little head lies on his breast,
While with a sigh of uttermost content
She murmurs, "I'm so sleepy, darky man."
"Nay, do not sleep just yet, dear little one,"
He begs, "for I am going to tell a tale
About your Daddy who has gone to Heav'n.
Listen to me: about six months ago
I went into a house, and there I found
A woman, weeping by her husband's side.
She did not see me enter, but he did,
And when with lifted hand I beckoned him,
He left his weeping wife and followed me.
It was on New Year's day six months ago—"
"The day he died!" cried Pansy's mother then.
"How should you know the day my husband died?
How can you know these things, who are you?—speak!"
"Do you indeed desire to know my name,
Have you not guessed it in your inmost heart,

Does not some inward monitor exclaim,
Whene'er I come, that I am not of earth?
Some speak my name in accents terrified,
Cov'ring their faces when I go to them;
While others, tired of earth's sad cares and woes,
Stretch out their weary arms and call my name.
At any time, in old age or in youth,
My call may come; and then, with joy or fear,
Leaving all worldly ties, they must obey.
Sometimes upon the waters dull and cold
I walk, and call to men in mighty ships;
Sometimes on railway lines I take my stand,
And wait with beck'ning hand the coming train;
Sometimes upon the cloudy mountain peaks,
Men see me in the valley far below,
And if I speak to them, they come to me;
Sometimes in darkness underneath the earth
Men work, and toil, and never see the day.
There in the gloomy depths of mining shafts
They see me come, and hasten to my side.
Few speak my name without a touch of fear—
Few stand and face me with undaunted mien;
Yet in my arms you only fall asleep,
To wake again in a more perfect Land."

He ceases speaking, and with gentle smile
He stoops to kiss the little, tired face,
That lies so trustingly upon his breast,
And with the murmured words, "Dear darky man!"
The blue eyes close, and Pansy falls asleep.
With stifled cry the mother fainting falls,
And lies quite still upon the cabin floor.
The night grows on apace, but silence reigns
Within the closed doors of that quiet room.
A sailor passes by the cabin door,
Hearing no sound he knocks—then knocks again;
He still can hear no answer from within,
And, thinking something wrong, he tries the door;
It yields, and with an awful cry of fear,
He sinks upon the ground at what he sees,—
Upon the floor a woman's prostrate form,
Lying face downward, motionless and pale,
While there, within the darkened cabin, stands
A mighty form with wings of sable hue.
The face is like La Mort's, but glorified
Exceedingly, and full of majesty.
Within his arms, her arms about his neck,
A little maiden sleeps; upon her face
A smile that speaks of peace ineffable—

That smile we see on faces of the dead.
The sailor cannot move or cry aloud,
And, crouching there with wide eyes full of awe,
He gazes on that great and wondrous face.
Yet he is not to die, for, passing him
With slow majestic tread and mien divine,
Death with his burden passes out of sight,
Lost in the gloom and shadows of the night.

CHRISTMAS

I SEE a plain all silvered by the moon,
And dappled with black shadows from the trees
That, scattered, raise their tall heads to the sky;
Amid their sleeping flocks some shepherds sit
And speak in voices hushed with mystery,
And point with trembling fingers to a star
That hangs suspended like some wondrous lamp
In the far Eastern sky of sapphire blue.
When hark! a strange commotion in the air,
A wild unearthly wave of harmony
Trembles and vibrates on their listening ear,
A rushing sound of many mighty wings,
A blinding flash of glory, then a voice,
O, heavenly sweetness, calls from out the light,
"Look up, look up, poor souls, the dawn is come,
The night is passed, and God has heard thy prayers;
There is His star all-glorious in the East,
Follow it, shepherds, and leave your flocks of sheep,
For unto you is born this very hour

A King and Saviour who is Christ the Lord."
The glory fades, the Angel-voice is still,
And, as in a dream, the shepherds rise,
Following with eager steps the starry guide,
Until at length they reach their Saviour's side.

THE HOLY SACRAMENT

WONDROUS and holy Sacrament of God,
Bread of the angels, food of all the saints,
Though of this earth I am, and full of sin,
In humble adoration I draw near
To partake of this great mystery.
The bread I eat was made by hands of man,
Yet Thou hast said it is Thy very self;
This most sweet wine I know comes not from heaven,
But Thou didst say "Drink this, it is My blood."
Master, thou art the Way, the Life, the Truth,
What Thy great truth hath made them I believe,
And meekly take them for my soul's great need.

ODE TO A VIRGIN MARTYR

O VIRGIN soul, who long ago
For Christ's dear sake didst give thy life,
Whose fettered hands and feet do show
How cruel was that Pagan strife,

Thy murmured prayers were not in vain
For strength to suffer and to die:
Bright angels came to ease thy pain,
And bear thy soul to realms on high.

Now shines life's crown upon thy brow,
The palm of victory in thy hand;
Before thy Lord thou bendest low,
O Virgin of the martyr band.

JESU MISERICORDE

O GENTLE eyes of Jesus, look on me,
And see the tears of true repentance flow;
O saving arms of Jesus, wrap me round
And lift me from this world of sin and woe.

O tender heart of Jesus, pity me,
For I do love Thee, though I fall in sin;
Lo, how I look to Thee to guard my steps;
Open my heart, sweet Lord, and enter in.

O cleansing blood of Jesus, pour on me—
Pour on my soul, and make it fair and new;
O holy grace of Jesus, give me strength
To be henceforth Thy child and servant true.

BEFORE A CRUCIFIX

MY steps to Thee are led,
For me Thy wounds have bled;
Around Thy sacred head
Sharp thorns entwine.
I lift mine eyes to Thee,
Hanging in agony;
Take Thou my soul from me,
And make it Thine

THE TASK OF ANGELS

WHAT lovely task is this great work divine
That opens human eyes to beauteous light,
That sets along the paths of righteousness
Feet that have strayed in many a path of sin,
That guides hands groping in this wilderness
Into the patient outstretched hands of God.

O TEMPORA, O MORES

INSPIRED BY THE PICTURE BY G. ROCHE GROSSE, "THE PURSUIT OF PLEASURE"

O TIME, O Death, O silent falling tears
Of men and women struggling for the light,
O'erwhelming sorrows and o'erwhelming fears,
Envelop them with clouds like darksome night.
What are these seeking, struggling, weeping men—
What is this treasure which they hope to find?
Some glorious thing beyond our human ken?
Some heavenly hope to stir their torpid mind?
Some crown of changing, ever living flowers,
Such as the angels wear in regions bright?
Why do they waste their sighs and tears and hours?
What is this magic wonder of delight?
It is a being most entrancing fair,
Bright as a cloud of ever varying hue,
With gauze-like wings and floating, golden hair,
With beck'ning hands, and eyes of softest blue;

How eagerly they watch her airy flight,
With steps more eager still they follow on,
Striving and pushing others in their fright,
Tearing their raiment lest the sight be gone.
There are a thousand white, uplifted hands
Imploringly outstretched; a thousand eyes
Seek that bright rainbow; natives of all lands
Call on her name; the air is full of sighs;
Nothing they see except that shining hair,
The phantom draperies of their treasure.
They seek o'er all this bubble filled with air,
And give themselves to the pursuit of "Pleasure."
In vain they cry, in vain they beg and pray,
And grasp her robe; hands trembling with delight,
E'en as they grasp her garments, melt away.
Ghost-like she mingles with the shades of night.

LOOK UP

O SOULS of men, look up towards the skies,
Even though evening shadows dim your eyes,
Even though the sun has gone to rest.
Look up, look up, 'tis ever for the best.
The shadows of the night creep fast around,
Yet listen, you will hear a far-off sound
Of angel voices singing to the star
Of Eve, as, far above the dimness and the mar
Of earthly things, it rises pure and sweet.
The eye of Christ, who from His mercy seat
Looks down upon us here, and yearning cries
"O, souls of men, leave all your sins and rise
To Me, that I may save you from the enemy,
And guide your steps into Eternity."

ODE TO THE DEAD

AND art thou dead?
Why is the world so dark, ah, why?
Thy soul hath fled
To realms and courts on high,
By angels led.
I must not weep—
Thy precious soul, God-given,
Does but sleep
To wake again in heaven.
I lay grief's flowers—
Fair lilies—on thy quiet breast;
May my last hours
Be calm as thine, and full of rest.
Beloved one, at eventide God did us sever—
Lit by the sun you passed from me,
Into the vast for ever.
To be downcast is vain;
I will not faint nor fail,
But seek at last
To join thee, love, behind the veil.

THE PASSING OF A SOUL

A MAIDEN comes with faltering steps and slow
To the still waters of a dull grey sea;
Slender and tall she stands upon the brink,
Her straining eyes seeking the other side,
Where shines and gleams a city all of gold;
She clasps her hands as if in ecstasy,
For is not that the country of the blest,
Where tears are dried and parting is no more?
Gladly she goes from this dark earthly sphere,
And waits the ferryman—sweet, silent Death.
No more her voice shall echo through the house,
No more her feet run lightly to and fro,
Because her eyes have seen a greater light,
Her ears have heard a far-off gentle voice,
Whose message bade her leave all else and come
To the fair land, whence no one shall return.
Thus does she come, leaving her home and friends,
And all that she in life has held most dear.
"Farewell, O Life," she cries, and lifts her arms

To greet the ferryman as he appears.
"Ferry me quickly, Death, across the stream,
Life's pleasures fade, and on the other side
I see the dawning of another day;
Faces I missed in life I see again,
Voices of those I lost come back to me.
Ferry me quickly, Death, across the stream,
Heaven is dawning, life was but a dream."

MEDITATION

IN holy meditation, solemn, sweet,
I kneel before Thine altar, Lord of life,
Far from the world's unending care and woe,
Far from the toil and strife.

'Tis even time, and darkness, soft and slow,
Steals o'er the church, and in the distance dim
Gleam the red lights that on the altar burn—
Burn like our thoughts of Him.

O sacred contemplation of Thyself,
O thronging, precious thoughts of Thee above
That overwhelm us and envelop us,
Filling our hearts with love.

While, listen! on the trembling air a sound
Floats to us, kneeling there in ecstasy,
Wafting our prayers yet nearer to Thy throne
On wings of harmony.

And so, sweet Lord, although we leave Thy house,
Wherein all holy thoughts and things abound,
All praise we leave behind for Thy dear love,
Great comfort we have found.

GLORIA MUNDI

THE world is dark, and many weary souls
Feel their way dimly 'midst its thorny path,
Content with shadows, seeking nothing more—
They cannot see the pearls and wondrous gems
Of Truth, and Purity, and Highest Thought—
They leave the gems and play with forms of glass,
They listen for the tinkle of the bells
On Folly's cap as he goes flitting by,
And miss the grand sweet music of the sea,
Whose whispering waves run swiftly to the shore.
God paints His pictures in the evening sky,
Banners of gold and purple cloud unfold,
And sunset flowers flame redly in the west,
The while men love, and laugh, and clap their hands
Over some little puppet show below;
And as they laugh the curtains of the night
Hide His fair pictures from their heedless eyes.
Paint on, great God, the flaming firmament,
The azure seas, the shining continents,

Colour the flowers in the emerald grass,
And blend anew the rainbow's mystery.
O, we are blind, and deaf, and very weak;
Be patient yet, for all Thy names are love,
In love Thy blood was shed on Calvary's hill,
O gentle God, we pray Thee love us still.

EARTH'S DARKNESS

THE night is dark and stormy,
We cannot see our way,
The path is dim and thorny,
Thou only art our stay;
O, lead us from our gloomy night,
Into the mystery and the light
Of everlasting day.

THE CHURCH OF GOD

THE Church of God, how wondrous fair is she,
Spotless from out the ages still she stands,
A tall white lily in this world of weeds;
Oft have men tried to root the lily up,
And plant a gaudier flower, but they have failed,
For still she lifts her pure white cup to Heaven,
A chalice meet indeed for God's sweet grace.

THE SEA

THOU art so restless, Sea, because thy depths
Are peopled with an ever-widening throng
Of men and women lost from off great ships,
Whose voices mingle with thy murm'ring waves,
And in the winds that sweep across thy breast.
So shalt thou restless be until the end,
When earth and sky shall roll away in flame,
And from the Heav'ns shall come the words Divine,
"Give up thy Dead, O Sea, for they are Mine."

ONE OTHER DAY

SOMETIMES within the silence of the night
We wake, and with a gentle, inward sigh,
Lie thinking of the things we might have done,
Of all the chances we have let slip by—
Perhaps the chance of helping some poor soul
A little nearer to the Heavenly goal.
In helping others we ourselves lose nought,
God's grace but nearer is the ofter sought;
Perhaps when two ways opened for our choice,
We chose the evil, heeding not His voice.
Well may we wish us quit this mortal coil,
Wherein is nought but pain and endless toil;
And thinking thus we turn our weary eyes
Away from darkness to the brightening skies;
Then as we gaze a flashing hope is born,
For see the creeping crimson of the morn
Tipping the hills with fire, the land with light,
The waking sun conquers soft, silent night;
While through the window steals one golden ray,
Thank God, we cry, there 's yet one other day.

THREE WREATHS

I LOVED you as a child,
And for your curls so bright;
I used to bind a wreath
Of daisies, gold and white.

Later, when you were mine,
Upon your sunny hair
I set love's fragrant crown
Of orange blossoms fair.

Then came that last, sad day,
That mournful, tolling bell,
And on your snow-white brow
A wreath of asphodel.

REGRETS

O FALLING leaves, O fading flowers,
O sighing of the wind,
Well may you weep and mourn, my soul,
For the days that lie far behind.

O dying days, O fleeting hours,
O distant, passing bell,
Well may you cry and sigh, my heart,
For the love you may never tell.

FORGET ME NOT

FORGET not me though I am far away,
Think of me—keep me ever in thy heart;
We may yet meet again some other day,
Even in Heaven, dear one, no more to part,
Until that joyous day I cry to thee,
Forget not me, dear heart, forget not me.

GOOD-BYE

I ASKED you, dearest, for one precious gift,
That gift your heart;
You could not give me what I asked, beloved,
And so we part.
You go your way, and I with many a sigh
Take up my heavy cross;
Sweetheart good-bye.

You weep: nay, do not drown those eyes for me,
Those tender eyes;
How oft I dreamt they sought mine lovingly—
O, sad surprise;
Those dreaming days are gone—
How swift they fly,
And with them goes my hope;
Sweetheart good-bye.

The greatest good in all my life will be
That I loved you;

The light within your soul has made in me
A soul more true.
My life will nobler be: you ask me why?
Because I have known you.
Sweetheart, good-bye.

A SHRINE IN MY HEART

THERE is a shrine within my heart;
My dear one, I have set you there.
Strewn at your feet are flowers fair,
Lilies like thy purity,
Roses red my love for thee.
At the shrine in my heart I may always pray,
For every day is my sweet saint's day.

DAWN

THOUGH at the close of day across the sky,
Steal the dim shadows of approaching night,
My soul is not cast down nor in despair;
For well I know the dawn is near at hand,
And in my soul, as well as o'er the land,
There shall be light.

SPRING

WHO is this tripping through the woods,
This slender maid with wind-blown hair,
Whose little hands are full of flowers,
She scatters gaily everywhere?

She calls aloud, and at her voice
The little tender leaves unfold—
A thousand glories spring to life—
The violet and the primrose gold.

The buttercup, the hyacinth,
The snowdrop, and the pink hedge rose;
The bluebell trembles in the grass,
The daisy's petal eyes unclose.

The limpid brook runs laughing by,
The birds are singing in the trees,
The incense of the warm new earth,
Is borne upon the gentle breeze.

Come out, come out, O youths and maids,
And round the May-pole dance and sing;
Leave gloomy Winter far behind,
And cry "All hail, fair Goddess Spring!"

AUTUMN

THE pallid Summer crowned with faded flowers,
Lies dying in her sister Autumn's arms.
Sadly the wind comes sighing through the trees,
Shaking the trembling leaves until they fall
Gently to earth, like showers of golden rain.
Only in memory dwell the pleasant scenes—
The warm, bright days and mass of roses fair,
The tender evenings silvered by the moon,
The gleam of scarlet poppies through the corn,
The songs of happy birds among the leaves,
The mystic afterglow when songs were hushed,
And tired workers rested from their toil,
To drink in all the beauties of the hour;
The creeping silver mist that slowly rose,
Hiding, with modest veil, the sleeping land
From the soft amorous glances of the moon.
For all these glories past we fain must sigh,
Autumn is weeping—Summer has to die.

MY LADY'S MOODS

HOW cold it is, and dull, and gray,
Rushing wind, and driving spray;
Sullen breakers rolling roar,
Impotent surge along the shore.
Shadow in all around I see,
Because my lady frowns on me.

Warm is the day, and sweet, and fair,
Golden the sun, perfumed the air;
Rippling wavelets gently break,
Calm is the sea as mountain lake.
Laughter in all around I see,
Because my lady smiles on me.

SPIRITS

O SPIRITS that hover around us,
That hover around and above,
O spirits of earth and Heaven,
O spirits of life and love.
Tell us, O tell us the secrets,
The secrets of death and life,
Strengthen us on our weary way,
Uphold us through earth's strife.

Whisper of souls immortal,
Sweet spirits of the air,
Point up to Heaven's portal,
Show us the golden stair.
Waft us on your shadowy wings,
Above the glamour of earthly things,
Into the city fair.

SLEEP

COME, sweetest Sleep, and close my tired eyes,
Thou gentle messenger come to me now:
The sun is set, the daylight slowly dies,
Set thou thy poppy wreath upon my brow;
Breathe on me with soft and welcome breath,
My weary eyelids close.
Yet if thou wilt not, send thy brother Death,
That I may for all time forget my woes.

SONG

LAUGH while ye may,
Be merry and gay;
Friends who are thine in prosperous days,
In times of adversity flee away.

AN INDIAN LOVE SONG

O WHEN I see your eyes, my heart's desire,
Those ever changing eyes so softly bright,
I can but sigh and cry the old, old cry,
I love thee, how I love thee, heart's delight.

O when I hear your voice, best part of me,
That voice like waters silvery and far,
I, like Mahomet's followers, do turn
To thee my East, my Dawn, my Morning Star.

If all the leaves on all the trees had tongues,
If the blue ocean and the golden sands
Could speak, I would command them all to say
That all my Heaven lies in your little hands.

ODE TO LOVE

WE climb the precipice with weary feet,
With fainting soul o'erwhelmed with many fears,
Yet in the end we reach the lofty height,
Where thou in pity driest all our tears;
All torture would we suffer for this end,
What matter if the hearts of us have bled?
O, figure of supremest majesty,
Standing all crowned with wreath of roses red,
O, welcome, that awaits our tired eyes,
O, sight, for which all men aspire,
Thou art the dawn, to thee our spirits rise,
All glorified by thy celestial fire.
Great wings of love we rest beneath thy shade,
O, love divine, thy roses never fade;
Yet when they touch the portals of all light,
Methinks, dear love, thy roses will be white.

THE TREE FAIRIES

O LIST to me, and I will tell
A tale of long ago,
Of fairies who in green trees dwell,
And sigh as if in woe.

Long, long ago, when fairies lived,
And folk beheld their tricks,
Came wise old men with books most rare,
And put them all in a fix.

Said they, "There are no fairies, friends,
'Tis your imagination."
Some folk were sad and some were glad,
The children were filled with consternation.

To one another they sadly said,
"What shall we do without the fays?
What shall we do when the fairies are dead?
How dull will seem the brightest days."

So they held a council one afternoon,
'Twas a lovely summer's day,
And decided to go that very night
To the fairies, and beg them stay.

And as night came on, softly one by one,
Into the moonlight they crept,
How silent it was in the woods alone,
For all the village slept.

Not a sound, not even the nightingale
Singing his songs of praise,
The evening mists like a silver veil
Hung o'er the woods of the fays.

Suddenly a form in raiment bright
Appeared in a hollow tree,
Saying to the children, "Calm your fright;
What would you have of me?"

"O, madam," said the eldest then,
"Be not annoyed we pray;
For our sakes pardon those horrid men,
And please don't go away."

"Children," the fairy made reply,
"We other sprites must go;
But the fairies who dwell in the trees shall stay,
Because you love them so."

Then she faded away, and silently
The children crept home to bed;
But they whispered together as they went
"The fairies are not dead."

And if you go in the woods in spring,
Above and around and behind
Are whispering voices that softly sing
To the music of the wind.

THE COLOURS OF ENGLAND

RED

I AM the rich, warm stream of life,
I am the hue of evening sky,
I faintly tinge a maiden's cheek,
More deeply touch her tender lips;
I am the shade of shame and death,
Of Love's full flower and soldier's coat,
Of ruby wine that makes men mad,
The crimson gem that buys a soul,
The colour deep of men's desires.

WHITE

As fair am I as midnight moon,
The chilly brightness of the stars;
I find a home on snowy peaks,
On fluttering wings of gentle doves,
Or folds of angels' spotless robes.
Like sweetest lilies of the field,
I symbolize a virgin pure;

A contrite heart forgiven of sin,
I am the light of holiness.

BLUE

I am the sky on warm spring days,
A bank of whispering hyacinths;
In maiden's laughing eyes I dwell,
And in the pale forget-me-not.
The depth of shimmering sea I am,
The mist that hangs on distant hills;
With sisters true, the white and red,
In England's brave old flag we wave,
Unfurled for God, the King, and Right.

A VISION

INSPIRED BY READING A BOOK BY WINIFRED GRAHAM

THROUGH upward curling wreaths of pale blue smoke,
We see the men and women of the world;
The air is heavy with perfume of flowers,
And all around are gleaming soft pink lights.
Music and laughter sound on every side,
And murmuring of voices like the sea;
The rustling swish of dainty silken skirts,
The flash of jewels and the flash of eyes,
The pictured pose of many a lovely dame.
Then suddenly all other sounds are hushed,
And, wailing through the heated atmosphere,
Is heard the note of one sweet violin—
"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide"—
Played with deep feeling by a hidden hand;
It seems to touch and thrill the very souls
Of those hard men and women of to-day.

At some time or another, long ago,
They used to know the words of that dear hymn—
"Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies"—
And as these words return on memory's wing,
The place grows dark, and, 'midst that worldly throng
There moves a Man of meek and saintly mien,
Clothed in white raiment falling to His feet,
And round His head an aureole of light.
One second do they see Him standing there,
With hands uplifted pointed to the skies;
And then the music stops, the vision fades,
While out into the darkness and the cold,
Passes a Form of wounded majesty.
Forgotten are His outstretched pleading hands,
The tears that lie like jewels on His robe;
Forgotten are the tender patient words,
"Remember Me Who so remembered you."
The doors are shut, and on the threshold stands
The Saviour unremembered and alone.

GOLD

THOU canst procure for me a worldly fame,
And call to me some friends of certain kind;
Enemies, too, who envy my estate,
And parasites who love me for my gifts.
When I do walk abroad with thee beside,
Men homage do, for thou and I are power.
If I crave gems, thou givest them to me;
Desire I rich apparel, it is mine;
Rare books, rare curios, a gorgeous house,
And many servants at my beck and call;
Together, thou and I can banquets give,
Unequalled and renowned to all the world.
Thou, too, canst crown me with an earthly crown
Of gaudy flowers, that all too quickly fade;
In fact, thou canst do much, and art my slave,
Just for the moment I thy master am;
I can command, thou must perforce obey.
But, Gold, there are some things thou canst not buy—
A maiden's purity, a man's strong love,

The glory of a life given for a life,
The martyr's crown, the dying soldier's cross—
Thou canst not buy for us the Heavenly Grace,
Nor show to us in Death the Saviour's Face.

WRITTEN AT A BAZAAR

O WHAT a day, a glorious day!
Every one got in every one's way;
Upon one another we almost rolled,
So anxious we were that things should be sold.
Baskets, and vases, and sweets, and toys,
For good little girls, and good little boys;
Beautiful damsels raffling things,
From boxes of chocolates to serviette rings.
Then night, with fireworks and Bengal lights,
Never had villagers seen such sights.
At last all went home, but near and far,
They talked of the wonderful Barholm Bazaar.

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